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Sen. Bulloch commends weight loss program

BAINBRIDGE – State Sen. John Bulloch (R-Ochlocknee) commended the efforts of Memorial Hospital and Manor and the Bainbridge/Decatur YMCA today for teaming up to offer a weight loss competition to the residents of Decatur County. Over 900 citizens are registered to compete in the first community *Team Lean* weight loss competition in Bainbridge, which begins January 31. The goal of the competition is to promote better health and wellness in the community and motivate participants to make changes in their lives to achieve that goal.

The program spans 12-weeks and divides participants into organized teams competing to lose the highest percentage of weight, and also win cash prizes. Teams are comprised of five individuals from businesses, churches, civic organizations, schools and other groups in Decatur. Each Wednesday from January 31 to April 25, all participants will weigh-in at designated locations and pay \$5 each week. For each pound gained, participants will pay \$1. At the end of 12 weeks, all funds collected will be distributed to the teams with the highest percentages of weight loss.

“This is an excellent program that I believe will help promote better living to all those who participate,” Sen. Bulloch said. “I am especially proud of Memorial Hospital and the YMCA for combining forces to offer such an innovative competition.”

There are no special diets or exercise programs associated with *Team Lean*, but healthy eating and exercise are encouraged. Drastic weight loss of over five lbs. per week is discouraged, due to health risks.

Memorial Hospital cites the many benefits of participating in *Team Lean*, such as achieving better health through weight loss and regular exercise, which allows for lower cholesterol and blood pressure, diabetes control, stronger muscles and joints and reduced respiratory problems. In addition to the health benefits, team competition promotes camaraderie, encouragement and motivation among team members. According to statistics, healthier employees have less medical expenses, which may decrease health insurance premiums.

As an extra bonus, the YMCA will waive the initial membership fee for each *Team Lean* participant who joins the YMCA during the competition. Also, Memorial Hospital will give free blood screenings to measure cholesterol, glucose, etc., at the beginning and end of the competition. Educational programs about nutrition and exercise also are planned during the 12-week competition.

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Sen. John Bulloch serves as Chairman of the Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee. He represents the 11th Senate District which includes Colquitt, Decatur, Early, Grady, Miller and Seminole counties and portions of Mitchell and Thomas counties. He may be reached by phone at 404.656.0040 or by e-mail at john.bulloch@senate.ga.gov.